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1 1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
2 at least one processor;  
3 a memory coupled to the at least one processor;  
4 class configuration data comprising a plurality of entries residing in the memory,  
5 each class configuration entry including a key-value pair, wherein the key includes  
6 information relating to a selected processing context and the value includes configuration  
7 data for a class in the selected processing context, wherein the key comprises context  
8 information appended to a class identifier; and  
9 an object oriented class replacement mechanism residing in the memory and  
10 executed by the at least one processor that generates an instance of a selected class by  
11 using a key that includes context information to access the appropriate entry in the class  
12 configuration data.

1 2. (Canceled)

1 3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [2] 1 wherein the class identifier  
2 comprises a class token that comprises a text string.

1 4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a factory object that generates  
2 an instance of the selected class by accessing the appropriate entry in the class  
3 configuration data using the key.

1 5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a key generator mechanism that  
2 generates the key from a class identifier and from the context information.

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- 1 6. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an instance of an object oriented class,  
2 the method comprising the steps of:  
3 (1) retrieving configuration data corresponding to the class in a selected  
4 processing context using a corresponding key that includes information relating to the  
5 selected processing context, wherein the key comprises context information appended to  
6 a class identifier; and  
7 (2) instantiating the instance of the class using the retrieved configuration data.
- 1 7. (Original) The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of storing the  
2 configuration data with the corresponding key.
- 1 8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the step of storing the configuration data  
2 with the corresponding key comprises the step of generating a key from a class identifier  
3 and from the context information.
- 1 9. (Canceled)
- 1 10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [9] 6 wherein the class identifier  
2 comprises a class token that comprises a text string.
- 1 11. (Original) The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of generating the key  
2 from a class identifier and from the context information.

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1 12. (Currently Amended) A method for replacing an existing class with a replacement  
2 class in a distributed object environment, the method comprising the steps of:  
3 (1) generating a key that comprises information relating to a current processing  
4 context appended to a class identifier for the existing class;  
5 [(1)] (2) storing configuration data for the existing class using [a] the  
6 [corresponding] key [that includes information relating to a selected processing context];  
7 [(2)] (3) replacing the configuration data for the existing class with configuration  
8 data for the replacement class while maintaining the same [corresponding] key;  
9 [(3)] (4) initiating the creation of an instance of the replacement class;  
10 [ (4) generating a key that includes information relating to the current processing  
11 context;]  
12 (5) retrieving the configuration data for the replacement class using the generated  
13 key; and  
14 (6) creating an instance of the replacement class according to the retrieved  
15 configuration data for the replacement class.

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1 13. (Currently Amended) A program product comprising:  
2 an object oriented class replacement mechanism that generates an instance of a  
3 selected class by using a key that includes information relating to a selected processing  
4 context to access an appropriate entry in class configuration data stored external to the  
5 class, wherein the key comprises context information appended to a class identifier; and  
6 signal bearing media bearing the object oriented class replacement mechanism.

1 14. (Original) The program product of claim 13 wherein said signal bearing media  
2 comprises recordable media.

1 15. (Original) The program product of claim 13 wherein said signal bearing media  
2 comprises transmission media.

1 16. (Canceled)

1 17. (Currently Amended) The program product of claim [16] 13 wherein the class  
2 identifier comprises a class token that comprises a text string.

1 18. (Original) The program product of claim 13 further comprising a factory object that  
2 generates an instance of the selected class by accessing the appropriate entry in the class  
3 configuration data using the key.

1 19. (Original) The program product of claim 13 further comprising a key generator  
2 mechanism that generates the key from a class identifier and from the context  
3 information.

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Please add the following new claims.

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- A2
- 1 20. (New) An apparatus comprising:  
2 at least one processor;  
3 a memory coupled to the at least one processor;  
4 class configuration data comprising a plurality of entries residing in the memory,  
5 each class configuration entry including a key-value pair, wherein the key includes  
6 information relating to a selected processing context and the value includes configuration  
7 data for a class in the selected processing context;  
8 a key generator mechanism residing in the memory and executed by the at least  
9 one processor that generates the key from the class identifier and from the context  
10 information, wherein the key comprises the context information appended to a text string  
11 class identifier; and  
12 an object oriented class replacement mechanism residing in the memory and  
13 executed by the at least one processor that generates an instance of a selected class by  
14 using the key to access the appropriate entry in the class configuration data, the class  
15 replacement mechanism comprising a factory object that generates an instance of the  
16 selected class by accessing the appropriate entry in the class configuration data using the  
17 key.

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1 21 (New) A program product comprising:  
2 an object oriented class replacement mechanism that generates an instance of a  
3 selected class by using a key that includes information relating to a selected processing  
4 context to access an appropriate entry in class configuration data stored external to the  
5 class, wherein the key comprises context information appended to a text string class  
6 identifier, the class replacement mechanism comprising a factory object that generates an  
7 instance of the selected class by accessing the appropriate entry in the class configuration  
8 data using the key, the class replacement mechanism further comprising a key generator  
9 mechanism that generates the key from the text string class identifier and from the  
10 context information; and  
11 signal bearing media bearing the object oriented class replacement mechanism.

1 22. (New) The program product of claim 21 wherein the signal bearing media comprises  
2 recordable media.

1 23. (New) The program product of claim 21 wherein the signal bearing media comprises  
2 transmission media.

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### STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-19 were originally filed in this patent application. The Examiner has provided three previous office actions, each of which were responded to with a Request for Reconsideration. In the pending office action, claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,405,209 to Obendorf. Claims 6-11 and 13-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Obendorf in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,430,564 to Judge *et al.* (hereinafter "Judge"). Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Obendorf in view of Judge and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,438,559 to White *et al.* (hereinafter "White"). No claim was allowed. In this amendment, claims 2, 9 and 16 have been canceled, claims 1, 3, 6, 10, 12, 13 and 17 have been amended, and new claims 20-23 have been added. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, and 17-23 are currently pending.